THE MIGRANT

Carolina Paroquet
AFTER WILSON
1810

VOL I DECEMBER 1930 Nº 3-4

WHY ARE BIRDS SO NAMED?

By H. S. Vaughn

"What's in a name?" Apparently very little when it comes to birds. Nowhere in nature has so great an injustice been done to the works of the Creator, as in naming birds. With trees and flowers, most of their names seem to more nearly describe or suit the object for which it stands. For instance, consider the names such as Oak, Elm, Maple, and Beech, how artistic are such names as Weeping Willow, Silver Birch, Green Bay and Live Oak. They seem to satisfy you. So, have the flowers been named with such as Lily, Rose, Iris, and Narcissus. These names roll off of the tongue in perfect music, while those equally beautiful, and far more vivacious creatures, the birds, have in many cases been designated by names that mean nothing. Not being content with this, they have even gone so far as to give some birds as many as two or three names, while the poor flicker can boast of as many as 124.

The following incomplete list will demonstrate how the birds have derived their names from some part of their external anatomy. While many of these names are useful in identifying the bird, others are misnomers, and rather confusing. To illustrate this point I will attempt to give some of the various heads, as well as a few examples under each head to illustrate the point.

The predominant color:
White---Snowy Egret, Snow Goose, Snowy Owl, White Heron, White Ibis, White Pelican.
Purple---Purple Finch, Purple Gallinule, Purple Martin.
Gray---Gray Flycatcher, Gray Jay, Gray Kingbird, Slate-colored Junco.
Blue---Bluebird, Blue Heron, Blue Jay, Indigo Bunting.
Green---Green Heron, Green Jay, Green Warbler, Olivaceous Flycatcher.
Yellow---Yellow Rail, Yellow Warbler, Goldfinch, Golden Plover.
Red---Cardinal, Redstart, Scarlet Ibis, Scarlet Tanager, Vermillion Flycatcher.
Brown---Brown Crane, Brown Creeper, Brown Pelican, Brown Thrasher.
Black---Blackbird, Black Skimmer, Black Swift, Black Vulture.
Those of more than one color: Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Violet-green Swallow, Yellow-green Vireo.
Spotted: Spotted Owl, Spotted Sandpiper.
Variegated: Barred Owl, Painted Bunting, Painted Redstart, Varied Thrush.
Color of Back: Olive-backed Thrush, White-rumped Shrike, Russet-backed Thrush.
Color of Bill: Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellownosed Abatross, Red-billed Pigeon.
Color of Head: Bald Eagle, White-crowned Sparrow, White-faced Ibis, Blue-headed Vireo, Golden-crowned Kinglet.
General: Bridled Tern, Hooded Warbler, Pileated Woodpecker.
Color of throat, chin, and neck: White-necked Raven, White-throated Sparrow, Ash-throated Flycatcher, Yellow-throated Vireo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird.
Color of under parts: White-breasted Nuthatch, Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, etc.
Color of wing: White-winged Dove, Blue-winged Teal, Golden-winged Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird.
General characteristics: Broad-billed Hummingbird, Crossbill, Curved-billed Thrasher, Long-bill Marsh Wren, Large-billed Sparrow.
Tail: Boat-tailed Grackle, Long-tail Chat, Scissor-tailed

WHY ARE BIRDS SO NAMED?
(Contd)

Flycatcher, Swallow-tailed Kite.
Wing: Broad-Wing Hawk, Rough Winged Swallow.
Name of places where usually found: Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, Cactus Wren, Chimney Swift, Cowbird, Field Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Marsh Wren, Meadow Lark.
Place where first discovered: Kentucky Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Philadelphia Vireo.
Size: Dwarf Screech Owl, Great Auk, Great-horned Owl, Least Bittern, Least Flycatcher, Least Vireo, Pigmy Owl, Greater Yellowlegs.
Named from their food: Duck Hawk, Fish Hawk, Gnatcatcher, Sparrow Hawk, Ricebird, Worm-eating Warbler.
And now comes the names of those birds which are named for persons who first discovered them, or in honor of some person who has no personal acquaintance with the bird in question.

The following are a few of the persons and their namesake: Allen's Hummingbird, named for Chas. A. Allen, who first discovered the bird in California; Audubon's Warbler, was discovered by Mr. Townsend who named the bird in honor of Audubon; Bachman's Warbler - this species was discovered in 1833 near Charleston, S. C. by Dr. Bachman for whom it was named, Bendire's Thrasher- named in honor of Bendire the discoverer, Coopers Hawk - so named in honor of William Cooper of N. Y., Harris Hawk - Audubon named this bird in honor of his friend Edward Harris, Ross' Snow Goose - Specimens first obtained by Robert Kennicott and Bernard R. Ross of the Hudson Bay Co. and presented to the Smithsonian Institute, Say's Pewee - dedicated to Thomas Say, Virginia's Warbler - First discovered by Dr. W. U. Anderson and Professor Baird dedicated the bird to the wife of the discoverer, Woodhouse's Jay - named in honor of Dr. Woodhouse who first discovered the bird in San Francisco Mountains, N. Mex. And so it goes on adinfinitum.

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FIFTEENTH ANIVERSARY FIELD DAY

To celebrate this auspicious occasion, a trip of more than ordinary interest was planned and carried out on Sunday, October 19, 1930. Meeting at the usual Five Points rendezvous at 8 A. M., our motorcade steered its course, some thirty-three miles north, to the point where Red River crosses the Louisville Pike. Enroute a stop was made at Issac Walton's tavern near Goodletsville, erected more than 130 years ago and now used as a farmhouse. It was here that Alexander Wilson, father of American Ornithology, spent the time between April 23 and 26, 1810 and near here he discovered the first Tennessee Warbler and, here or at Nashville, that he found the first Nashville Warbler. He also found Carolina Paroquets nearby, in flocks.

At Red River, "Cheeks Stand," an old log tavern, built in 1800, still stands well preserved. Wilson chronicles how he stopped here, conversed with the keeper and with him entered a cave nearby where rumor had it, the keeper secreted bodies of travelers whom he had murdered and robbed. The cave, very picturesquely situated in the face of a nearby cliff, was visited by the group of thirty-seven, who made the trip.

History over with, the party repaired to the Red River Bridge making headquarters there and

FIFTEENTH ANIVERSARY FIELD DAY (Cont'd.)

proceeded to list the birds of the vicinity. At one-thirty, the clear chill October day had whetted appetites for an excellent dinner, cooked on several open fires under the sycamores on the river bank. The committee on food having been given the deserved vote of thanks, the group again dispersed through open fields to resume the days census. When all notes were compared at four o'clock, the hour of departure, it was found that forty-five species had been listed, as follows:
Kildeer 43, Dove 2, Turkey Vulture 25, Black Vulture 35, Marsh Hawk 1, Red-tailed Hawk 1, Kingbird 1, Hairy Woodpecker 3, Downy Woodpecker 2, Pileated Woodpecker 1, Red-bellied Woodpecker 3, Flicker 6, Phoebe 2, Prairie Horned Lark 5 Jay 20, Crow 200, Starling 6, Meadow Lark 20, Bronzed Grackle 150, Goldfinch 8, Savannah Sparrow 4, White-throated Sparrow 35, Chipping Sparrow 7 Field Sparrow 6, Song Sparrow 4, Junco 5, Towhee 2, Cardinal 6, Waxwing 12, Tennessee Warbler 6, Myrtle Warbler 35, Black-throated-green Warbler 1, Palm Warbler 1, Oven-bird 3, Mockingbird 2, Carolina Wren 4,Brown Creeper 1, White-breasted Nuthatch 1, Titmouse 3, Carolina Chickadee 10, Ruby-crowned Kinglet 2, Golden-crowned Kinglet 4, Robin 3, Bluebird 8, Rather a poor list, due to the windy cold day and short time.

An illustrated cartographic souvenir of the trip had been prepared by the President and since it contains additional information, a copy is included in this issue of The Migrant.

WINTER RESIDENTS

By W. M. Walker

Any person who plans to make a more or less continuous study of bird life will find that the work will fall into four general groups; namely: summer residents, spring and fall migrants, and winter residents. At the present season it is only natural that we turn our attention to the last mentioned group.

A preliminary inspection of the subject shows that we may classify the birds which remain with us during the colder months, either as permanent residents, for example, theCardinal, the Crow, and others, or as winter residents in the strict sense of the term since such birds migrate from the north and remain here only during the winter season. Of the birds belonging to this group we might mention the Junco, the Myrtle Warbler and the Song Sparrow, and as an erratic example of this group, the Cedar Waxwing. Also most of the ducks and geese are residents only during winter months.

Likewise we have the privilege of studying land birds, water birds or both, depending on the nature of the surrounding topography. Water birds often frequent the smaller streams and marshes and are also found on the larger rivers and lakes. But whether we look on the stream, in the meadow, or in the woods and thickets, feathered creatures are everywhere present.

In addition to the pleasure derived from the actual observation of birds, there is also the exercise that keeps one physically fit and mentally alert thereby developing ones quickness of sight and keenness of ear. A call note, a song, or perhaps a flash of color and you have located another

WINTER RESIDENTS
(Cont'd.)

feathered friend that otherwise would not have been noticed.

The amateur might find it profitable to begin his study at this time of year, because the number of species of birds in the given locality are at the lowest and this would enable the student to study with less chance of confusion. Then, with the absence of foliage the birds are more easily found. These newly made friends may be studied throughout the year if they are permanent residents, or the observations may be continued until the spring migration begins and they leave for their nesting grounds in the north.

Where does one look for birds? That question may be discussed in two ways. One can wander from field to thicket, to woods, or stream and observe whatever chances across his path, but sooner or later this method will not satisfy his desire for detailed information and the likely haunts of the most eagerly sought birds will be the next method of study. The wood-pecker family serves admirably as an illustration.

Although the Pileated Woodpecker occasionally may be seen in the neighborhood of the home, this bird is usually found only in the large timber, preferably in some isolated section. The Red-head winters here only in small numbers and the observer is forced to go deep into the thick woods to find one or with luck perhaps two of these birds. A beech grove or the sturdy oaks seem to be their choice of a winter habitat. The Red-bellied Woodpecker is very well distributed. This member can be found in the trees along creeks, roads, and near houses, as well as in the thickly timbered areas. The Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers have the same range as the Red-bellied. The Sap-sucker, however, is not as plentiful as the other members of the family and can be found usually in well wooded areas.

The territory around Nashville affords an abundance of thickets, which may to a large extent account for the native sparrows that are so numerous. The Field Sparrow, the Fox Sparrow, the White-throat, the White-crown, and the Song Sparrow can be found in or near these thickets which offer both food and shelter for the taking.

Observe the birds closely and soon you will learn which ones to expect in the open meadow, along the row of old fence posts, around dwellings and barns, or even in the protecting advantages of the sheltered cliffs. Make the winter residents your permanent friends.

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DUCKS
By H. C. Monk

Everyone is familiar with the flocks of wild ducks which cross our skies in their spring and fall migrations. Their swiftly moving flocks flying so high above us, bring a touch of the wilderness into our lives for ducks are of the wild wild. They are game birds and represent the age-old struggle of man against nature. They symbolize sport and the employment of skill and cunning in the chase.

Quite a different picture is presented when we see these birds in sanctuary on some protected marsh or lake where they live their lives in peace. Nashville is fortunate in having such a lake in Radnor,

DUCKS
(Continued)

secluded in high wooded hills and protected from intrusion by its owner. It serves as the local point where water birds of all kinds congregate while in the region. It thus provides an ideal place to observe these interesting forms.

Most prominent among its many and varied visitors are the ducks of which twenty-four species have been recorded at this lake. In this large group of birds are some which have wandered from distant parts of the country; birds which are usually found on the Great Lakes or sea coast. Others, like the Mallard, are familiar in every country in the land. They range in size from the large Black Mallard to the dimunitive Teals. Their plumage may be as dull as the female Mallard or as brilliant as the Wood Duck. They present from fall to spring a constantly changing company.

The first ducks appear on the lake in early September when small flocks of Blue-Wing Teal are seen. Every year these little birds are the earliest arrivals. They give the impression of having traveled far, usually resting on the shore, sleeping or preening their feathers. Following them are the Mallards, with their hansome green heads, 'Black Jack' and 'Blue Bill' and other species less well known like the Baldpate and Pintail or "Sprig".

Some of these birds, like 'Blackjack' (Lesser Scaup) and "Bluebill" (Ring-neck), remain on the lake all winter regardless of the cold. The Mallards have always disappeared before Christmas, however, and are not often seen except in the fall. At that season the presence of several hundred of these large beautifully colored ducks on the lake makes a sight to be remembered.

The severe cold of the winter sometimes brings to the lake, visitors from more northern waters. For the last two years there has been a flock of Old Squaw ducks, a species beautifully marked in black and white, from the far north. These ducks live on food secured by diving and remaining under water for long periods when searching for food. Their striking plumage, queer call notes and interesting habits make of them star attractions while they are present. Another handsome winter visitor is the Golden Eye or 'Whistler, with the whitest back and darkest green head to be seen on any duck. These ducks are also the shyest that occur on the lake.

Many other species have dropped in on this lake but cannot be listed now. Nothing has been said here of Reelfoot Lake which is Tennessee's classic ducking ground, nor mention made of the rivers and creeks along which wild ducks are frequently seen. From the constant changes at Radnor Lake I judge that the winter ducks wander freely over the face of the country and may drop in on any water at any time or other.

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NEWS ITEMS

Bird banding, for those who are located in rural surroindings and who can devote a bit of time to it, is an absorbing method of bird study. To be able to handle live birds in ones own hands, to look forward to retaking birds banded in previous years after a flight perhaps to foreign lands or possibly to trap birds banded by some other bird student in a far away state, is all very fascinating. We need more bird banders among our members.

NEWS ITEMS (Cont'd.)

Chimney Swifts: Preparations were made to hand a large number of Swifts at 928 Broad Street on October 17 bit a cold spell, which had arrived the night before, drove all but about 300 southward. The last, about 50 in all, came to the chimney the evening of the 18th. Professor Wyman R. Green had driven up from Chattanooga, with his trap, etc., and local members were on hand to assist. Only the evening before, the 16th, it was estimated that more than 10,000 Swifts had dropped into the big Chimney. Professor Green has banded more Swifts than anyone we know of, having placed over 16,000 bands. This year he had over 500 "returns."

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The Wilson Ornithological Club, a national organization of more than 800 members, will hold its annual meeting at Cleveland, Ohio, on December 29-30, 1930. Dr. J. M. Shaver, Secretary; Mr. A. F. Ganier, Past-President, and several other T. O. S. members expect to attend.

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Our 15th annual Christmas Bird Census for the magazine Bird-Lore, will be taken as usual this year, on or near Christmas day. Nashville members should ascertain plans from the President shortly before that time. Out of town members should send their lists direct to Bird-lore.

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Feed the birds at this time of the year and they will repay you in the summer with their songs.

The T. O. S. has held some 25 or more Spring and Fall Field Days: during this time it has visited many interesting and beautiful places. This list should conjure up some pleasant recollections: Linton, South Harpeth (River) School, Marrowbone Creek, Ridgetop, Bluff of the Cumberland at Ashland City, Idlewild Wood, Rattlesnake Falls (Lawrence Co.), Narrows of the Harpeth, Turnbull River at Craggie Hope, Sycamore (Creek), Pinhood Creek, Red River (Robertson Co.), etc. etc.

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Of the several excellent journals of bird life, The Wilson Bulletin has contained more information on birds of the Central South than any other. It is a well illustrated quarterly of about 80 pages per issue, published at Sioux City, Iowa, as the official organ of the Wilson Ornithological Club and the subscription price is $1.50 per year. Those wishing to receive The Bulletin should get in touch with Secretary Shaver, at Peabody College, Nashville.

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Lake Watauga in Centennial Park, at Nashville, has been stocked with a nice collection of ducks, geese, and swans, some two dozen varieties in all. The native species, which may here be studied at close range, are: Blue and Green-winged Teal, Mallard, Gadwell, Redhead, Pintail, Wood Duck, Coot, Snow Goose, Blue Goose, Canada Goose, and Swan. A visit there is well worth while.

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NEWS ITEMS (Cont'd.)

We have the promise of some interesting material for publication during 1931. Your Editor needs a basket full of "Copy", however, to choose from and all members are invited to send in notes of interest.

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The latest addition to the Tennessee State Museum is a female Coyote. It was killed in Maury County by Mr. Knox and prepared by Grover Cook. It is believed that it is from a stock of Coyotes that were liberated in West Tennessee at Grand Junction for the purpose of training hounds.

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A list of our members will be published in the next number of THE MIGRANT. Those who are in arrears will be dropped from the list. We need these funds to pay for our publication. Dues for 1931 are now due.

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We are quite anxious that different members send in reports and help to make this journal truly state-wide as to news.

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A good meeting with an interesting program is held every two weeks at Peabody College. Come out and visit us. Our next is January 4th.

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Keep all of your Migrants for future reference and study.

In reference to the design on the cover, it represents the Carolina Paroquet, which at one time was reported found in middle Tennessee by Alexander Wilson on his famous trip through here in 1810.

Quoting from Davie, "In the first part of the present century (1898) the beautiful Carolina Paroquet was very abundant in the South Atlantic and Gulf States, and its migration extended far northward. It has continued to diminish in numbers until it is now nearly exterminated. It is still found in some regions of Florida.....There appears to be no positive information concerning the actual number of eggs laid by the Carolina Paroquet in its wild state."

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